

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
ASSESSMENT (EA) FOR THE SMALL WIND ENERGY PROJECT, AT NAVY
OPERATIONS SUPPORT CENTER (NOSC) AND MARINE CORPS RESERVE
(MARFORRES) CENTER, AMARILLO, TEXAS

Pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500-1508) implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, and Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 5090.1C, the Department of the Navy (Navy) gives notice that an EA has been prepared and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required for the small wind energy project, at the NOSC and MARFORRES Center, Amarillo, Texas.

Proposed Action: The Proposed Action is to install and operate a single 100-kilowatt (kW) wind turbine at the NOSC and MARFORRES Center, Amarillo, Texas as part of the MARFORRES Wind Energy Program. The proposed action would be on land owned by the DoN/Commander Navy Installations Command (CNIC), for which Navy Region Southeast (NRSE) is the property record holder and MARFORRES is a tenant. The proposed turbine has a hub height of 121 feet with a maximum height of 155 feet to the tip of the rotor.

The purpose of the proposed action is to develop wind as an energy source at MARFORRES Center, Amarillo in support of the MARFORRES Wind Energy Program. The purpose of the MARFORRES Wind Energy Program is to reduce dependency on fossil fuels and increase energy security and efficiency through development of wind energy projects at MARFORRES facilities across the U.S. The action is needed to meet legislative, Executive Order, and DoD goals for the use of renewable energy while contributing to the sustainment of mission requirements. The proposed action will support the attainment of Department of Defense (DoD) renewable energy goals through the on-installation production of wind energy at the NOSC and MARFORRES Center, Amarillo, Texas. Wind has been identified as a readily available, economically feasible source for renewable energy production at this facility.

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Existing Conditions: The proposed action and action alternative would directly impact approximately 0.45 acre of land which is already developed and/or disturbed.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was provided information on the project and consulted informally, and relevant information was obtained to ensure that the requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, and Migratory Bird Treaty Act/Executive Order 13186 have been addressed. Because ESA-listed species, federally designated critical habitat and bald and golden eagles, do not occur in the project area, no further actions were required under the ESA and BGEPA.

For consideration of historical and cultural resources of the proposed action, the physical Area of Potential Effects (APE) amounts to a total of 0.45 acre and the visual APE is defined as 0.5 mile. None of the existing structures at the Reserve Center or within a 1 mile area around the proposed turbine have been determined to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. There are no historic properties within the 0.5 mile visual APE for structures, and there are no known archaeological sites within the boundaries of the Reserve Center itself.

Just south of the NOSC and MARFORRES Center are five storm-water retention basins known collectively as Playa Lake 21 (T-anchor Lake). Final designs for construction will ensure no impact to the floodplain associated with the Lake.

Alternatives Analyzed:

In addition to a No-Action Alternative, two action alternatives (1 and 2) are evaluated in the EA.

Alternative 1 is to construct the 100 kW wind turbine at the edge of a parking lot on the east side of the Navy property. This location is next to the main building on the property: the NOSC and MARFORRES Center.

Alternative 2 is to construct the 100 kW wind turbine on the west side of the property and across a storm drain channel from the NOSC and MARFORRES Center. This location is on the edge of the motor pool lot.

Alternative 1 has been selected because it would require less construction to install an electrical connection (the

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Alternative 2 connection would not have to cross the storm drain channel), and would be slightly farther from adjacent non-military uses to the west of the Navy property.

Environmental Effects:

Under either action alternative, the Proposed Action would have no direct, indirect, or cumulative effects on geological or cultural resources, airspace, health and safety, or transportation. For all other resources, impacts would be negligible to minor and less-than-significant, as summarized in the following paragraphs.

The Proposed Action would be compatible with the ongoing military mission and local land uses. Adjacent land uses and sensitive receptors would not be adversely affected by noise from the turbine. The implementation of construction BMPs will minimize impacts to soils and water resources, and the final construction design will ensure there is no impact to the floodplain of T-Anchor Lake.

The proposed action will have no effect to threatened or endangered species nor result in the destruction or adverse modification of Federally designated critical habitat. Because of the disturbed character of the project site and extent of development in the surrounding region, biological resource impacts will be limited to a low number of collisions (approximately one per year), most likely affecting common bird and bat species. There would be no effect on ESA-listed species, and the likelihood of a collision involving any species of concern is extremely low.

The Texas State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) was sent a Section 106 consultation letter on 1 June 2011 and subsequently issued concurrence with a finding of "no historic properties affected" on 12 July 2011. In the event of an inadvertent discovery of a potential cultural resource during site construction, construction activity at that location would cease until the potential resource is evaluated by a qualified archaeologist. Furthermore, while the turbine will be visible, it will not have a significant impact on views from surrounding areas.

Apart from a small economic benefit due to the purchase, installation, and operation of the turbine, there will be no socioeconomic impact. Temporary, non-significant emissions will

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occur during construction, whereas operation of the turbine will replace the consumption of fossil fuels, thereby having a beneficial impact on air quality. A Record of Non-Applicability for Clean Air Act General Conformity requirements has been prepared (refer to Appendix A of the EA). No disruption of local utilities or adverse impact to the use of airspace by aircraft or by electronic media such as radar will occur.

There will not be any disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects from either action alternative on minority or low-income populations. No hazardous materials will be generated by the Proposed Action.

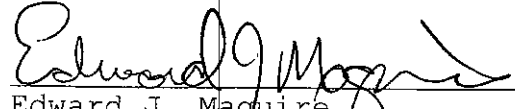
The Proposed Action will have minor to negligible, localized impacts that are unlikely to interact or combine with the impacts of other actions. As a result, no cumulative impacts will occur. The Proposed Action entails a small commitment of natural or finite resources (fuel and materials), but in the long term will contribute to the reduced use of those resources and will enhance productivity. No mitigation or monitoring measures for adverse impacts are required.

Finding: Based on the analysis presented in the EA and coordination with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Arlington Ecological Field Services Office, and Texas State Historic Preservation Office, the Navy finds that implementation of the proposed action will not significantly impact the quality of the human or natural environment or generate significant controversy.


The EA prepared by MARFORRES for the Navy addressing this action is on file and interested parties may obtain a copy from: Marine Corps Support Facility, NOLA, 2000 Opelousas Ave., Bldg. 1, Rm. 2W4700, New Orleans, LA 70146-5400 (Attention: Alain Flexer, Energy Manager), or Department of the Navy; NAVFAC SE, NEPA Compliance Section EV21; Box 30, Building 903; NAS Jacksonville, Fl 32212-0030 Attention: Mr. Royce Kemp, or via email at kemp.royce@navy.mil.

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17 Aug 2011
Date


Edward J. Maguire
Deputy AC/S Facilities, Marine
Forces Reserve

16 Dec 11
Date


J. C. SCORBY, JR.
Commander, Navy Region Southeast